WHY IAN GOES DEEP PURPLE...

. . . he's angry because the underground snobs are criticising instead of just listening

by ROY SHIPSTON

IAN GILLAN, Deep Purple's singer, hit back this week at "underground snobbery" and all the knocking that exists when a band finally makes it. He defended success in the singles' chart and he defended Purple's fans. He even stood-up for Black Sabbath.

Ian knows there's not much point in knocking-the-knockers but they've got him so annoyed lately that he felt had had to defend the group.

"I'm very careful to steer clear of all this sort of thing but since it's started to happen for us some people have enjoyed attacking us. And it really brings us down. It shouldn't bother us, I know, but it has. It's brought us closer together, though.

"There's so much snobbery about 'underground' and 'teenybopper' — I really hate those words. We just want to be what we are. Of course there are people of 14 and 15 who come and see us and I'm sure they would hate to be thought of as 'teenyboppers.' They have a bit more intelligence than people give them credit for.

"The thing is that people who come along to see us are real people, whatever their age. You get a few dummies and a few people who want to make trouble. Some come in an antagonistic frame of mind, but most of them are prepared to listen to the music and enjoy themselves. All we want to do is play music and enjoy ourselves!"

PURPLE aren't the first band to be knocked. It's also been fashionable recently to have a go at Led Zeppelin and Black Sabbath. And it shouldn't really have an effect on them if they believe in what they are doing.

"A lot of people knock Zeppelin, and they are a really great band. The best bands are those who do what comes naturally to them. We've been trying to convince ourselves in what we're doing and we believe in it now.

"Black Sabbath also seem to have suffered lately. I haven't seen them but I think their record is a very fine single — and they've been disturbed by the reaction to it. They should stick to their guns. There's nothing wrong with singles. People are more likely to buy a single at the end of the week. They aren't such good value for money as albums but some people have to save up for two or three weeks to be able to afford an LP.

"We'll probably do another single if we can find one. But there's no hurry to do a 'follow-up.' As soon as we come up with a song that sounds as though it would make a good single we'll put it out, but we don't know when that will be."

Purple recently had to put up with the Equals accusing them of copying. And when Ian went on stage at the Fairfield Hall, Croydon, he had the perfect reply — "We're going to do an Equal's number."

"I SUPPOSE it was a bit silly saying that. It's best just to ignore those sort of things. But I'm just sick to death of all the snobbery that's going on. It seems you are only underground if you are completely ignored.

"There are so many different definitions and standards now — even rules seem to have been created. But what does 'teenybopper' mean? Most of the people who come to see us, whether they are 15 or 25, are great people. I usually get a great feeling of warmth when I go on stage in Britain — and that's a wonderful thing."

Now Ian is on stage somewhere in Germany where the group is doing a three week tour. Their two concerts in Hamburg were sold out in two hours. It is since he and bass player Roger Glover joined the line-up over a year ago that Deep Purple have won acceptance for their music. But Ian puts this down to the fact that all five of them were searching for a direction at the time. "We've found an identity now. We all had the same ideas but Roger and I had the problem of looking for a direction and I think the others had the same problems. Together we found it."

Apart from their classical flirtations it is their latest album "Deep Purple In Rock" which has probably done more for them than anything else. It's the nearest thing, on record, to what they are like on stage. And they are already working on the next LP.

"Richie and I wrote a couple of songs the other night. Two tracks are virtually complete. We are going to spend three weeks together finishing off all the writing, then we are going to spend a week in the studio before the British tour in January—to finish it off. It shouldn't take so long this time because we know more about recording techniques. We won't have to spend hours experimenting."

As a bonus "Black Night" has just crept into the top 100 in America. At No. 90 to be precise. And "In Rock" will possibly follow over there although the American market may feel cheated if the single isn't on the album. "That's the way it works there, the opposite to here." But Purple don't plan to desert their fans and "emigrate" to the States.

"Deep Purple have done three American tours. I wouldn't mind doing a short tour early next summer. But I think our music, and it's influences, is very British so there's not really a lot of point in going over there."

McGUINNESS FLINT: left to right, Benny Gallagher, Tom McGuinness, Graham Lyle, Hughie Flint and Dennis Coulson.

McGuinness—the new Beatles?

McGUINNESS Flint is a five-man group with a strange past and, it seems, an incredible future

Their album, "McGuinness Flint," due out early in December, is quite outstanding. It falls into the indefinable category the Beatles made for themselves, and in many ways they could be likened to the Beatles. Each track is different; the songs are of good quality, and each complete in itself. "Bodang Buck" is country style, another is blue grass; "Heritage" has a sweet acoustic sound; and "Letting You Know" is blues.

Even lead vocalist Dennis Coulson's voice is similar to Paul McCartney's.

There is no effort to follow or copy the Beatles, but it could be that they'll take up where the Beatles left off.

Their first single, "When I'm Dead And Gone," has been tipped to go right to the top. It's from the album.

Nine of the tracks were written by group members Benny Gallacher and Graham Lyle, who came to London from Lanark in Scotland about four years ago, as writers for Apple.

McGuinness Flint have been together for a year—just rehearsing! They survived by taking jobs outside the music business and were helped along by Benny and Graham's royalties from three B sides they wrote for Mary Hopkin.

Apart from having those two very talented writers, McGuinness is remarkable in other ways.

They are one of the few British acts to be signed by the American Capitol record company, who have helped them through the rehearsal period with a kind of advance on royalties.

The group don't really want to go into the single market and had intended on concentrating on the LP, but it was decided that the single was necessary to getting them off the ground.

The American signing means that McGuinness Flint will have to make a promotional tour of the States soon, possibly early in the new year.

And that album may be released a little sooner in the States than it is here.

"But it is more important to be successful in Britain than it is to be big in America," said Benny. "You're not a success of you don't make it here."

Hugh Flint, owner of half the group name, is a much travelled drummer who has played with John Mayall, Alexis Korner, Georgie Fame, Alan Bown, Savoy Brown and Chicken Shack.

Other half of the name belongs to Tom McGuinness, ex-Manfred Mann. He stresses that his influence on the band isn't a carry over from the Manfred days, but some ideas may have been kept subconsciously.

They emphasise that their music doesn't fall into any particular category as they play equally well with acoustic as they do with heavier sounds.

"We are an overground group," joked Hugh. "We just want to be a good group and enjoy ourselves at the same time."

"That's not to say you have to be falling about all over the stage laughing to enjoy yourself," added McGuinness. "You can do that playing soft and beautiful songs. We want to give people a good time. We'd rather people enjoyed themselves then felt they had been at some great cultural event."

McGuinness co-wrote "Lazy Afternoon," their own B side, and "Letting You Know" with Dennis Coulson for the album.

The group will probably begin working in small provincial clubs, to get used to the audiences and test reaction.

Their year of rehearsal was certainly well spent.

Rosalind Russell

Later that same year

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